

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ABU DH 01454 230821Z
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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R 221230Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7866
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USICA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, PINT, XF, TC
SUBJECT: SHAIKH ZAYID'S INTERVIEW WITH CHICAGO TRIBUNE GROUV

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: UAE PRESIDENT SHAIKH ZAYID ON MAY 20 GAVE
A PRESS INTERVIEW TO EDITORS AND REPORTERS OF CHICAGO
TRIBUNE GROUP CURRENTLY TOURING MIDEAST. INTERVIEW WAS
TELEVISED AND SHOWN VIRTUALLY IN ITS ENTIRETY OVER ABU DHABI
TV ON MAY 21 AND CARRIED IN ARABIC AND ENGLISH LOCAL PRESS
MAY 22. DESLITE MAJOR ATTENTION GIVEN TO ZAYID'S REMARKS
BY UAE MEDIA, HIS RESPONSES TO EDITORS' QUESTIONS WERE
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PAGE 02 ABU DH 01454 230821Z

GENERALLY CAUTIOUS, BLAND, AND LACKING IN NEWSORTHINESS.
AMONG MORE IMPORTANT POINTS WAS ZAYID'S EMPHASIS THAT
PLO IS ONLY LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE,
HIS IMPLICATION THAT UAE AND HE PERSONALLY DONOT
RECOGNIZE UNSC RES 242 BECAUSE IT RECOGNIZES ONLY THE
EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL AND NOT NATIONAL RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIANS,
AND HIS PESSIMISTIC CONCLUSION THAT SADAT INITIATIVE HAS FAILED.

ZAYID CALLED ON US ADMINISTRATION TO ADOPT "MORE POSITIVE AND EFFECTIVE" (I.E., MORE PRO-ARAB) ATTITUDE ON MIDEAST ISSUES. HE DECLINED TO BE DRAWN INTO DIRECT CRITICISM OF SOVIET ROLE IN AREA . END SUMMARY

2. UAE PRESIDENT SHAIKH ZAYID MET WITH VISITING CHICAGO TRIBUNE EDITORS MAY 20 AT HIS RURAL RETREAT ON SIR BANI YAS ISLAND. PAO WILCOX ACCOMPANIED EDITORS TO MEETING WHICH WAS TELEVISED ADND SHOWN VIRTUALLY IN ITS ENTIRELY (MINUS ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF ZAYID'A ARABIC REPLIES) OVER AB DHABI TV IN PRIME TIME EVENING OF MAY 21. LOCAL ENGLISH AND ARABIC LANGUAGE PAPERS MAY 22 PUBLISHED WHAT APPEARS TO BE VERBATIM TEXT OF QUESTIONS AND ZAYID'S REPLIES. (ENGLISH VERSION BEING POUCHED NEA/ARP.)

3. MAJOR PORTION OF INTERVIEW WAS DEVOTED TO MIDEAST ISSUE. ZAYID DUCKED DIRECT ANSWER TO QUESTION ABOUT FURTHER RECOURSE BY ARABS TO OIL EMBARGO FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES, SAYING ONLY THAT ARABS WOULD NOT RESORT TO THIS STEP EXCEPT IN CASE OF AN AGGRESSION IN WHICH CASE "THESECOUNTRIES COULD NOT EXPORT THEIR OIL EVEN IF THEY WANTED TO." ZAYID EXPRESSED DOUBT PLO COULD EVER RECOGNIZE ISRAEL AND AFFIRMED THAT PLO IS ONLY LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE OF PALESTINIANS RECOGNIZED BY ARAB COUNTRIES AND BY PALESTINIANS THEMSELVES. HE DID NOT REPLY DIRECTLY TO QUESTION WHETHER UAE HAD GIVEN YASIR ARAFAT MATERIAL SUPPORT DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 1346), LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 ABU DH 01454 230821Z

SAYING ONLY THAT WHILE "ARAFAT RECEIVES FROM US CONTINOUS SUPPORT, "RECENT VISIT HAD BEEN TO BRIEF ZAYID ON SITUATION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON.

4. MOST INTERESTING AND IN SOME WAYS MOST PUZZLING RESPONSE WAS TO QUERY WHETHER ZAYID PERSONALLY RECOGNIZES UNSC RES242. ZAYID'S REPLY WAS THAT HOW CAN RES 242 BE RECOGNIZED WHEN IT PROVIDES FOR RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST BUT NOT FOR RIGHT OF PALESTINIANS TO EXIST AND ESTABLISH A STATE IN THEIR OWN LAND. ZAYID WENT ON TO SAY THAT "JUST SOLUTION" COULD BE BASED UPON OFFERING PALESTINIANS "CO-EXISTENCE" WITH THE JEWS AS IN CERTAIN ARAB COUNTRIES LIKE MOROCCO AND IRAQ. (COMMENT: PRESUMABLY ZAYID MEANT SOME SORT OF BINATIONAL PALESTINIAN STATE BUT HIS RESPONSE WAS NOT CLEAR ON THIS POINT.) ALTERNATIVELY, THEY COULD BE OFFERED PARTITION (COMMENT: ZAYID PRESUMABLY MEANT CREATION OF AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE OR ENTITY ON THE EST BANK).

5. ASKED IF HE SUPPORTS SADAT INITIATIVE TOWARD ISRAEL, ZAYID REPLIED THAT WHILE SADAT FAILED TO CONSULT OTHER ARAB LEADERS HE TOOK HIS INITIATIVE "BELIEVING IT WOULD SERVE INTERESS OF THE ARAB NATION. BUT THE ENEMY REPLIED WITH AGRESSION AND

MEANNESS. NO RESULTS HAVE APPEARED TO DATE AND IT IS LIKELY THAT (THE INITIATIVE) WILL ACHIEVE NOTHING." ZAYID ADDED THAT HE IS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR MIDEAST SETTLEMENT IN VIEW OF ISRAEL'S POLICIES. ARABS DO NOT WISH ANOTHER WAR, ZYID ASSERTED, BUT ISRAEL DOES, AS EVIDENCED BY ITS "AGGRESSIVE, EXPANSIONIST POLICY."

6. ASKED IF HE BELIEVES PRESIDENT CARTER SHOULD EXERT MORE PRESSURE ON ISRAEL TO REACH A SETTLEMENT, ZAYID SAID THAT U.S. AS "JUST MEDIATOR" SHOULD PRSSURE SIDE "WHICH DOES NOT RESPOND TO RIGHT." HE APPRECIATES "DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED FOR U.S. ADMINISTRATION BY ZIONIST PRESSURE GROUPS IN U.S. AND WESTERN COUNTRIES GENERALLY" BUT STILL BELIEVES U.S. SHOULD ADOPT " A MOGE POSTIVE AND EFFECTIVE ATTITUDE TO MAINTAIN STAB LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 ABU DH 01454 230821Z

ILITY IN MIDEAST."

7. ON QUESTION OF UAE INTERNAL UNITY, ZAYID SAID UNIFICATION HAS BEEN DIFFICULT BUT WITH PATIENCE AND PERSERVERANCE FEDERATION CAN BE CONSOLIDATED, DESPITE "SINFUL HANDS WHICH INTERVENE TO OBSTRUCT ITS MARCH." ASKED IF THESE "SINFUL HANDS" INCLUDE SOVIET UNION, ZAYIED DECLINED TO SPECIFY ANY ONE PARTY (COMMENT: WE SUSPECT HE MAY HAVE HAD SOME OF THE DOMESTIC CRITICS OF HIS STRONGLY CERTRALIZINT TENDENCIES IN MIND) BUT INCLUDED ALL THOSE WITH AN INTEREST IN GULF INSTABILITY AND NON-COOPERATION AMONG NATIONS. IN RESPONSE TO A LATER QUESTION ABOUT WHETHER HE SHARED SAUDI FEARS OF SOVIET INFLUENCE IN MIDEAST REGION, ZAYID AGAIN AVOIDED DIRECT CRITICISM OF SOVIET POLICIES AND ACTIONS IN AREA.

8. COMMENT: DESPITE EDITOR ATTENTION GIVEN BY LOCAL MEDIA

TO ZAYID'S RESPONSES TO TRIBUNE EDITOGS, HIS REMARKS WERE GENERALLY CAUTIOUS, BLAND AND LACKING IN NEWSWORTHINESS. WE SUSPECT THAT ZAYID SPOKE CARELESSLY RATHER THAN BELIBERATELY IN SUGGESTING THAT UAEG DOES NOT RECOGNIZE RES. 242 BUT WILL SEEK EARLY OCCASION TO RAISE THIS POINT AT APPROPRIATE LEVELS HERE AND ASK FOR CLARIFICATION.
DICKMAN

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Message Attributes

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